

1 Rule 7.5. Firm Names and Letterheads.

2 (a) A lawyer shall not use a firm name, letterhead or other professional designation  
3 that violates Rule 7.1. A trade name may be used by a lawyer in private practice if it  
4 does not imply a connection with a government agency or with a public or charitable  
5 legal services organization and is not otherwise in violation of Rule 7.1.

6 (b) A law firm with offices in more than one jurisdiction may use the same name or  
7 other professional designation in each jurisdiction, but identification of the lawyers in an  
8 office of the firm shall indicate the jurisdictional limitations on those not licensed to  
9 practice in the jurisdiction where the office is located.

10 (c) The name of a lawyer holding a public office shall not be used in the name of a  
11 law firm, or in communications on its behalf, during any substantial period in which the  
12 lawyer is not actively and regularly practicing with the firm.

13 (d) Lawyers may state or imply that they practice in a partnership or other  
14 organization only when that is the fact.

15 Comment

16 [1] A firm may be designated by the names of all or some of its members, by the  
17 names of deceased members where there has been a continuing succession in the  
18 firm's identity or by a trade name such as the "ABC Legal Clinic." A lawyer or law firm  
19 may also be designated by a distinctive website address or comparable professional  
20 designation. Although the United States Supreme Court has held that legislation may  
21 prohibit the use of trade names in professional practice, use of such names in law  
22 practice is acceptable so long as it is not misleading. If a private firm uses a trade name  
23 that includes a geographical name such as "Springfield Legal Clinic," an express  
24 disclaimer that it is a public legal aid agency may be required to avoid a misleading  
25 implication. It may be observed that any firm name including the name of a deceased  
26 partner is, strictly speaking, a trade name. The use of such names to designate law  
27 firms has proven a useful means of identification. However, it is misleading to use the  
28 name of a lawyer not associated with the firm or a predecessor of the firm, or the name  
29 of a nonlawyer.

30 [2] With regard to paragraph (d), lawyers sharing office facilities, but who are not in  
31 fact ~~partners~~ associated with each other in a law firm, may not denominate themselves

32 as, for example, "Smith and Jones," for that title suggests ~~partnership in the practice of~~  
33 that they are practicing law together in a firm.

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